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This paper analyzes short stories written in English and French by French immersion pupils at the Grade 3 level. Their English writing skills are compared to those of Grade 3 pupils in a regular English program. Aspects of their writing skills which are examined include vocabulary skills, technical skills (punctuation, capitalization and spelling), grammatical skills and creativity. The errors made by the pupils are discussed in detail. (Author)

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Writing Skills of Grade Three French Immersion Pupils

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This paper analyzes short stories written in English and French by French immersion pupils at the Grade 3 level. Their English writing skills are compared to those of Grade 3 pupils in a regular English program. Aspects of their writing skills which are examined include vocabulary skills, technical skills (punctuation, capitalization and spelling), grammatical skills and creativity. The errors made by the pupils are discussed in detail.

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Writing Skills of Grade Three French Immersion Pupils[1]

Merrill Swain

As part of a longitudinal evaluation of the French immersion program in the Ottawa area public schools (Barik and Swain, 1975), the writing skills of the Grade 3 pupils were assessed. This paper reports the results by (1) comparing French immersion pupils' ability to write in English with that of pupils in the regular English program; and (2) comparing French immersion pupils' ability to write in French with their ability to write in English. Further it describes in detail some of the more frequent errors made by the pupils in French in order to provide a basis for the preparation of appropriate instructional material.

The study involved 40 pupils from two French immersion Grade 3 classes and 24 pupils from two regular English Grade 3 classes. The French immersion classes and regular English classes were comparable with respect to linguistic characteristics (all from English-speaking homes) and socio-economic background (generally middle to upper-middle class).

French immersion programs have been described elsewhere (see for example Lambert and Tucker, 1972; Swain, 1974; 1975). Suffice it to say here that the French immersion pupils in the present study were instructed entirely in French in Kindergarten and Grade 1. In Grades 2 and 3 they continued to receive all their instruction in French with the exception of approximately one hour a day of instruction in English Language Arts taught to them by an English-speaking teacher. The regular English pupils on the other hand, received all their instruction in English at all grade levels with the exception of daily 20 minute French language classes.

The pupils in the present study were required to write two stories in

English each based on a different picture, the second picture being the more complex and detailed of the two. The first picture showed a train, a boy wearing a jacket and cap, and a small dog. The boy is waving at the train. The second picture showed a house on fire, a lady at a second story window, two firemen, a firetruck, and a ladder going up to the window. One fireman is manning a hose; the second is on the ladder. The French immersion pupils were required to write two additional stories in French each based on a different picture. The first picture showed a child wearing a raincoat and carrying an umbrella. The child is standing in front of a book lying in a puddle of water. The second picture depicted a boy and a girl on the beach. The boy is running across the sand playing with a kite. The girl is playing in the sand with a pail and a shovel, making a sandcastle. There is a sailboat, and some seagulls in the background. The time limit allowed to complete each story was ten minutes. For the French immersion pupils, the English stories and French stories were written on two separate occasions.

The stories the children wrote were analyzed on the basis of the following four categories:

(1) Vocabulary skills

(2) Technical skills (spelling, punctuation, and capitalization)

(3) Grammatical skills (sentence types and syntactical errors)

(4) Creativity

The next four sections consider each skill in turn, first describing the basis of the analysis followed by description of the results.

Preliminary analyses of the stories involved the calculation of averages for the number of words per sentence, the number of sentences per story, and the number of words per story. Words were considered to be units bounded by spaces. Contractions were considered as two words; hyphenated words were

classed as one word. Sentences were defined as units marked by capitalization (other than proper nouns) or a period, or both. The results are shown in Table 1.

No statistical analyses have been made of any of the data presented in this report because the concern of this paper is less with the magnitude of the differences between groups (which has been well documented in evaluation reports (Lambert and Tucker, 1972; Barik and Swain, 1974)) and more with the errors themselves. In other words, it is felt that it is important educationally at this point in time to note what errors French immersion pupils make.

TABLE 1

Average Number of Words and Sentences Used in English and French Stories

	English Stories		French Stories
	Regular	Immersion	Immersion
Average number of words per sentence	13.4	12.5	11.3
Average number of sentences per story	4.6	6.5	5.7
Average number of words per story	61.6	81.3	64.4

In English, the French immersion pupils wrote on the average about one word less per sentence than the regular English pupils (12.5 versus 13.4). However, the French immersion pupils wrote an average of almost two sentences more per story than the regular program pupils (6.5 versus 4.6). Thus, overall, the French immersion pupils wrote longer stories in English (approximately 20 more words per story) than their English-instructed peers.

In French, the French immersion pupils wrote about one word less per

sentence (11.3 versus 12.5) and about one sentence less per story (5.7 versus 6.5) than they did when writing English stories. However, they still wrote slightly longer stories in French than did the regular English pupils in English (64.4 versus 61.6 words).

VOCABULARY SKILLS

a) Variety

Token refers to each noun (verbs, prepositions, etc.) used. Type refers to each different noun (verbs, prepositions, etc.) used in each story. A type-token ratio (TTR), that is, a ratio of the total number of types to the total number of tokens within any particular part of speech, represents the variety of use within that specific part of speech. The higher the ratio, the greater the variety of nouns (verbs, prepositions, etc.) used. In other words, the higher the ratio, the less there is repetition of vocabulary items within the part of speech being considered. TTRs were calculated for nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs and prepositions in each English story written by the regular English pupils and by the French immersion pupils, as well as in each French story written by the French immersion pupils. Average TTRs were then calculated within each part of speech (see Table 2).

The following points should be noted about what was included in the vocabulary counts:

(1) The noun count included proper nouns.

(2) The verb count did not include modals, (e.g., will, may).

(3) The adjective count included predicate adjectives, (e.g., "The ball was little"),[2] as well as past participles used as adjectives, (e.g., "She was frightened") and nouns used as adjectives, (e.g., "He has a rubber ball", "She had a candlelight dinner"). It did not include either possessive adjectives (e.g., his) or qualifiers, (e.g., some).

(4) Adverb phrases of time such as "last night," "one day," "all the time" and "all of a sudden" were counted as one adverb.

(5) The preposition count did not include the "to" in front of an infinitive in English. In French "de", "à" and "pour" in front an infinitive were included in the count.

The TTRs are shown in Table 2. These results are important as, although the TTR in each category in English is higher for the regular English pupils, the difference between the two groups of pupils in each category is small (e.g., adjectives .82 versus .80). The largest difference occurs with respect to prepositions (.81 versus .75). Thus, with the possible exception of prepositions, French immersion pupils used as much variety in their choice of

TABLE 2

Type-Token Ratios

	English Stories		French Stories
	Regular	Immersion	Immersion
Nouns	.69	.65	.66
Verbs	.72	.70	.69
Adjectives	.82	.80	.86
Adverbs	.91	.89	.85
Prepositions	.81	.75	.58

English vocabulary (nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs) as their English-instructed peer group. Furthermore, the French immersion pupils used as much variety in their choice of French nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs as they did in their choice of English nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. With respect to prepositions, however, they used less variety in French than in English.

Less variety in the use of French prepositions relative to English prepositions may be due to differences in the two languages. For example, "de" was a frequently used preposition in the French stories, and in most cases its use was obligatory, that is, no other preposition was acceptable. Thus it is possible that there was less opportunity of choice in French prepositions than in English necessarily reducing the TTR in French relative to English. However, this is mere speculation which could be verified best by examining the TTRs in French stories written by native French-speaking children.

b) Errors (morphological and lexical misuse)

Morphological errors and errors of lexical substitution, addition or omission (lexical misuse) were examined. Note was made of spelling errors and syntactic errors, but these are described elsewhere in this paper under technical and grammatical skills respectively and are not included in the counts of errors noted in this section. Table 3 summarizes the results. The figures in Table 3 represent the number of lexical substitution and morphological errors occurring within the noun (verb, adjective, etc.) category expressed as a percent of all the nouns (verbs, adjectives, etc.) used.

TABLE 3

Morphological Errors and Lexical Misuse (Substitution, Addition or Omission)

	English Stories		French Stories
	Regular	Immersion	Immersion
% of nouns with errors	1.7%	1.0%	3.3%
% of verbs with errors	4.0%	2.6%	18.5%
% of adjectives with errors	0.8%	0.3%	16.7%
% of adverbs with errors	2.3%	1.5%	3.2%
% of prepositions with errors	5.4%	3.2%	9.8%
% of articles with errors	1.9%	2.3%	18.0%
% of pronouns with errors	4.4%	1.6%	11.3%

The first point to note is that although the differences are not large, the French immersion pupils made fewer lexical substitution and morphological errors percentage-wise in each part of speech than did their English-instructed counterparts with the exception of articles. Thus the French immersion children are performing at least as well in vocabulary skills in English as their English-educated peer group.

The second point to note is that the French immersion children made more errors percentage-wise in writing French words than they did in writing English words. The differences are especially marked in verbs (18.5% versus 2.6%), adjectives (16.7% versus .3%), articles (18.0% versus 2.3%), and pronouns (11.3% versus 1.6%). Verbs must be marked for number agreement and tense. Adjectives, articles and pronouns must be marked for number and gender in many cases. It would be interesting to know how native French-speaking children perform in these areas relative to the French immersion children. Do French children have as much difficulty with the French verbal system and with marking gender and number agreement as the French immersion children (i.e., with these parts of speech, is written French more complex than English?), or is the French immersion pupils' poor performance related to the fact that French is a second language and still being learned?

The kinds of errors made by each group in writing their stories are described below with respect to each part of speech.

Nouns

Most of the errors involving English nouns were connected with noun number. And the majority of these number errors involved confusion, in the second story over fireman and firemen (e.g., "a firemen came", "some fireman came; they..."). Most of the remaining errors in English nouns involved expressions

of quantity with one, some and all (e.g., "one of our friend__", "all of the train__").

The majority of errors involving nouns in French were classified as lexical substitution. These were divided into two definite types. Either the pupils were unfamiliar with a vocabulary item in French and therefore substituted an English equivalent (e.g., "sa petite spade", "dans le suitcase"), or the pupils used a word that was similar in form (e.g., "la bibliothèque" (bibliothécaire)) or similar in meaning (e.g., "avant la cloche" (l'heure); "la terre" (sable)).

Verbs

On the whole, the French immersion pupils used a smaller range of verb tenses in English than the regular English pupils, limiting themselves mostly to present, simple past, and an occasional progressive. The most frequent type of error observed in the English stories was the omission of past tense endings "dog stop___"; "I open___".

Errors involving French verbs included using the incorrect past participle form (e.g., "a perdre" (perdu)); wrong auxiliary (e.g., "a tombé", "a venu"; incorrect subject-verb agreement (e.g., "les enfants sommes allées", "Paul et Sophie va"); incorrect infinitive form (e.g., "je vais fait", "perder"); and also fabricated forms (e.g., "a pron" (pris)).

Adjectives

Errors related to the use of the adjective in English were rare. An example is "Thanks to the fireman the lady would have been died".

Errors related to the use of the adjective in French primarily involved incorrect number agreement (e.g., "elle est triste<u>s</u>") or incorrect gender agreement (e.g., "un petit<u>e</u> livre", "un livre ancien<u>ne</u>"). The remaining errors involved the use of fabricated or inappropriate forms (e.g., "ils sont <u>mous</u>" (mouillés)).

<u>Adverbs</u>

In English the errors involving adverbs were mostly lexical substitutions rather than incorrect adverb forms. An example of adverb lexical substitution is "The train went <u>along</u>" (The train went by). An example of the use of an incorrect form is "<u>Afterward</u> I went to bed,..." (After I went to bed,...).

In French all adverb errors involved lexical substitution (e.g., "un jour" (aujourd'hui), "Martine <u>juste</u> joue").

<u>Prepositions</u>

Most errors in English involved preposition substitution (e.g., "all <u>in</u> a sudden", "slept <u>to</u> ten o'clock") and a small number of cases involved omission (e.g., "there is a fire __ my next door neighbours").

In French, again the majority of errors involved preposition substitution (e.g., "<u>audesous</u> de sa tête" (audessus), "<u>pour</u> l'école (à)", "<u>sur</u> la cours" (dans)). However, some errors involved the addition of a preposition (e.g., "<u>sur</u> lundi", "regardé <u>à</u>") or the omission of a preposition (e.g., "a dit __ tout le monde" (à)).

<u>Articles</u>

In the case of articles in English most errors involved omission of articles (e.g., "there was__little house", "got__ladder"). The French immersion pupils also tended to confuse <u>a</u> and <u>an</u> (e.g., "<u>an</u> metal", "<u>a</u> avalanche").

The majority of errors of articles in French involved incorrect gender (e.g., "tout cette jour", "sa livre", "un fille"). It is interesting to note that even within a story, one would find both, for example, "un fille" and "une fille". Other errors involved article omission and addition, particularly in expressions that appeared as translations from English, (e.g., "c'est __temps", "pour un longtemps", "livre de l'école"). Errors involving number agreement were relatively rare, perhaps because the pupils tended to use singular nouns in their stories. An example of an error in number is "le__ deux enfant__".

Pronouns

Most of the errors involving pronouns in English were categorized as either cases of ambiguous reference, or no antecedent. Examples included such sentences as: "She opened the kitchen door; it was on fire" (the door, or the oven?), "they told them" (no antecedent), "So Tommy helped him move the tree", (no antecedent).

In French, the majority of the errors involved the omission of either reflexive pronouns (e.g., "__est arrêté" (s')); direct object pronouns (e.g., "j'__ai apporté" (l'), "aller __ cacher"(me)); or indirect object pronouns (e.g., "__ a donné" (lui)). Also errors in gender (e.g., "il la lance" (le livre)); number (e.g., "nous allons me coucher"); and person (e.g., "nous allons se coucher") were observed.

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Punctuation (omitted, substituted, added), capitalization (omitted, added) and spelling errors were noted and analyzed.

Further specification within these categories of technical skills is

necessary.

Punctuation was counted as:

a) omitted - if capitalization was included, but terminal punctuation was missing; also included here were omissions of appropriate punctuation required to set words off (quotations, interjections, nouns in apposition, etc.).

b) added - if an apostrophe was included within a word (for example, in French stories where rules for English possessive constructions were sometimes used).

c) substituted - included substitution of comma for semi-colon, semi-colon for colon, etc. Also included here was substitution of English quotation marks (" ") for French (<< >>) in the French task.

Capitalization was counted as:

a) omitted - if a period was used to mark the termination of a sentence, but initial capitalization was missing.

Spelling errors were counted as:

a) 1 error only if a word was misspelled more than once in the same way within a story.

b) 1 error only if the same "morphological" spelling error occurred more than once in a story (this included use of -ez or é for infinitive ending, or -er for past participles, etc.).

c) 1 error only if more than one spelling error occurred in the same word.

d) errors in accents in French were counted as spelling errors.

The results concerning technical skills are summarized in Table 4 where the average number of errors per story are given.

TABLE 4

Technical Skills - Punctuation, Capitalization and Spelling: Average Number of Errors in English and French Stories

		English Stories		French Stories
		Regular	Immersion	Immersion
Punctuation	Average number omitted per story	2.0	2.7	1.7
	Average number added per story	0.1	0.1	0.3
	Average number substituted per story	0.1	0.4	0.4
	Average number of punctuation errors per story	2.2	3.2	2.4
Capitalization	Average number omitted per story	1.3	1.6	0.6
	Average number added per story	0.1	0.1	0.1
	Average number of capitalization errors per story	1.4	1.7	0.7
Spelling	Average number of spelling errors per story	4.1	4.6	8.3

Punctuation

French immersion pupils made on the average one more punctuation error per English story than the regular English pupils (3.2 versus 2.2). It must be remembered however, that the French immersion children wrote longer stories and therefore had more opportunity to make errors. The most frequent errors included the omission of a period at the end of a sentence, omission of commas, omission of quotation marks, and omission of the apostrophe in possessives. These errors were on the average made about equally as often by both groups of children. In addition, however, French immersion pupils made some errors rarely if ever made by the regular English pupils. These errors

are listed below from the most frequent to the least frequent.

1. omission of the apostrophe in contracted verb forms and negatives, e.g., "you__ll", "couldn__t".
2. use of dash instead of quotation marks.
3. incorrect position of apostrophe, e.g., "could'nt".
4. omission of question marks.

In French, the French immersion children made fewer punctuation errors than they did in writing English. Again, it must be taken into account that the French immersion children wrote shorter stories in French than in English and therefore had fewer opportunities to make errors. The errors from most frequent to least frequent are listed below.

1. omission of the apostrophe in pronoun-verb contraction, e.g., "jai" "cétait".
2. omission of hyphens, e.g., "donnez__moi", "pense__t__il".
3. omission of the period at the end of a sentence.
4. omission of commas.
5. hyphens added when not needed, e.g., "par-ce-que".
6. use of English quotation marks (" ") instead of French quotation marks (<< >>).
7. omission of quotation marks.
8. omission of the apostrophe in article-noun contractions, e.g., "lautre"
9. omission of the apostrophe in negatives, e.g., "na pas".

Capitalization

In English, the difference between the number of capitalization errors made by the regular English pupils and the French immersion pupils was small (1.4 errors per story versus 1.7 errors per story respectively). Again, it

must be pointed out the French immersion children wrote longer stories in English and therefore had more opportunity to make errors. Both groups of children omitted the capitals on proper names about equally as frequently. They also omitted capitals at the beginning of a sentence about equally as frequently. In addition, the French immersion children tended to omit capitals on words that are not capitalized in French, for example, days of the week and months of the year.

In writing the French stories, the French immersion pupils made fewer capitalization errors per story than they did in writing English stories (.7 versus 1.7) or than the regular English pupils did in writing English stories (.7 versus 1.4). These errors consisted, as in English, mainly of omitting the capitals on proper names and at the beginning of a sentence. Perhaps the superior performance of the French immersion pupils on French capitalization relative to themselves or to their English-instructed counterparts in English is due to the fact that there are fewer instances in French where capitalization is necessary, although it would have been possible for the French immersion pupils to "overcapitalize"; that is, to put capitals in French where they are not required.

Spelling

Although the average number of spelling errors per story in English was slightly greater for the French immersion children (4.6 versus 4.1), it must be remembered that the French immersion children wrote longer stories. When this is taken into consideration, it turns out that on the average 6% of the words in each English story written by French immersion children contained spelling errors whereas 7% of the words in each English story written by the English-instructed group contained spelling errors.

In French the French immersion pupils made more spelling errors per story

than they did in English. In fact, on the average 13% of the words in each French story contained spelling errors. It would be interesting to know to what extent these errors would have been made by native French-speaking children.

No attempt has been made to classify the errors since not enough data are available to determine which errors are due to confusion between the two language systems and which errors are due to confusion within one of the language systems. In order to make these distinctions, data from French-speaking children would be needed. Instead all of the spelling errors have been listed in Appendix A. Appendix A1 lists the spelling errors made by the regular English pupils writing English stories. Appendix A2 lists the spelling errors made by the French immersion pupils writing English stories. And Appendix A3 lists the spelling errors made by the French immersion pupils writing French stories.

GRAMMATICAL SKILLS

a) Types of Sentences

Sentences were classified as simple, compound, complex, compound-complex, or as a sentence fragment. Simple sentences included sentences with compound subject noun phrases (e.g., "Andrew et Margaret sont très contents"). Compound sentences were any sentences joined by a coordinate conjunction or which had a double predicate (e.g., "One day he went to the train station and waved his arm at the driver"). Complex sentences were any sentences with a relative clause (e.g., "Une fois il y avait un petit garçon qui est allé à la maison de son ami") or with an adverbial clause (e.g., "The lady cried 'help' because her house was on fire").

The average number of each type of sentence occurring per story was

calculated as well as the percentage that each type of sentence represented of the total number of sentences. The results are shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5

Types of Sentences

		English Stories		French Stories
		Regular	Immersion	Immersion
Simple	average number per story	2.1	2.8	2.8
	% of total number	46%	43%	50%
Compound	average number per story	1.2	1.3	1.2
	% of total number	26%	20%	20%
Complex	average number per story	0.6	1.2	1.0
	% of total number	13%	19%	18%
Compound/ Complex	average number per story	0.6	1.0	0.6
	% of total number	13%	15%	11%
Fragments	average number per story	0.1	0.2	0.1
	% of total number	2%	3%	1%

In English, the French immersion pupils wrote proportionately fewer simple and compound sentences and more complex and compound/complex sentences than their English-educated peers. In all cases, however, the differences are small, never exceeding 6%. These data suggest that the French immersion children are writing sentences in English which are at least as sophisticated as their English-educated counterparts. Furthermore, in French, although there was a slight tendency for them to write proportionately more simple sentences than they did in English (50% versus 43%), the French immersion pupils are about as advanced in the types of sentences they use in written French as in English.

b) Syntactic Errors

Errors of syntax were noted in the English and French stories. Only about 2% of the sentences in the English stories written by either group of pupils contained syntactic errors. About half of the errors made by the French immersion pupils in English appear to be due to the influence of French,

for example, adjectives misplaced, adverbs misplaced or direct objects misplaced. However, the absolute frequency with which these errors occurred was very low.

Approximately 10% of the sentences in the French stories written by the French immersion pupils contained syntactic errors. The types of errors made are noted below in order from the most frequent error to the least frequent.

1. misplaced pronoun, e.g., "a amené nous", "tu peux aider moi".
2. misplaced direct object noun, e.g., "a laissé son livre tomber".
3. misplaced adverb, e.g., "Martine juste joue dans la sable".
4. misplaced adjective, e.g., "du froid l'eau".
5. misplaced preposition, e.g., "qui il appartient à".
6. misplaced negative, e.g., "j'ai attrapé rien".

CREATIVITY

Analyses of creative skills involved determining the number of stories in both languages with titles, the number of descriptive stories and, for comparison purposes, the number of narrative stories. Within the stories, such elements as logical chronological sequence, selection of proper names for characters and use of dialogue were counted. The stories were also assessed according to creativity or imagination of the narrative (creation or elaboration of relevant events using the picture as a starting point). The data on creative skills are found in Table 6.

TABLE 6

Creative Skills

	English Stories		French Stories
	Regular	Immersion	Immersion
% of stories with titles	38%	61%	50%
% descriptive stories	6%	8%	14%
% narrative stories	94%	92%	86%
% of stories with logical chrono-chronological sequence	53%	53%	51%
% of stories with dialogue	6%	29%	21%
% of stories with proper names for characters	36%	44%	64%
% of stories creating events related to, but not represented in picture	45%	35%	45%

In English, the regular English pupils created titles for 38% of the stories they wrote. In comparison, the French immersion pupils created titles for 61% of the stories they wrote. In French, the French immersion pupils added titles to 50% of the stories. Although this is lower than the percentage obtained by the same group of pupils on the English task, it is still higher than that obtained by the regular English pupils in writing their English stories.

In an effort to establish what general kinds of stories the pupils wrote in regard to the pictures provided, a comparison was made of the number of pure descriptions, as opposed to narratives (which often included some description as background). Six percent of the stories written by the regular English pupils and 8% of the English stories written by the French immersion pupils were of a purely descriptive nature. In French, however, 14% of the

stories written by the French immersion pupils were purely descriptive stories. Thus, the French immersion pupils seem slightly more inclined to write descriptive stories in French than in English or, to put it another way, they seemed less inclined to write narrative stories in French than in English (86% versus 92% respectively).

Within the stories analyses were done on logical chronological sequence - i.e., the flow of the paragraph - did it flow smoothly and logically from one event to the next, or was it disjointed and awkwardly sequenced? Fifty-three percent of the stories written in English by both groups demonstrated logical chronological sequence. Approximately the same percentage of French stories (51%) were written in a logical chronological sequence.

The percentages observed regarding the inclusion of dialogue by the various groups are interesting - 6% of the stories written by the regular English pupils and 29% of the English stories written by the French immersion pupils included dialogue. Thus the French immersion pupils made greater use of dialogue in their English stories than did the regular English pupils. They also made greater use of dialogue in their French stories than did their English-instructed peers (21% versus 6%), although they used less dialogue in their French stories than in their own English stories (21% versus 29%).

The regular English pupils created proper names for characters in 36% of the stories they wrote. French immersion pupils created names for characters in 44% of the English stories and 64% of the French stories they wrote.

As a measure of imagination or creativity, the stories were analyzed on the basis of creation of events relating to the picture, but not necessarily evident in the actual picture. This included elaboration of the background to the picture, as well as narration of events which took place either prior to, in conjunction with, or after the events shown in the picture. These

extra events must have been related to the picture, that is, they must have used the picture as a starting point. A description of a forest fire in conjunction with the second picture on the English task, though imaginative, was considered off-topic, and therefore counted as "inappropriate". In many cases it is difficult to draw the line between originality or creativity, and inappropriateness. Forty-five percent of the stories written by the English pupils, 35% of the English stories written by the French immersion pupils and 45% of the French stories written by the French immersion pupils included related events not represented in the picture.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Overall the performance of the Grade 3 French immersion pupils in writing English stories compares favourably with that of their English-instructed peers considering the limited time devoted to formal school instruction in English Language Arts relative to the regular English program pupils. Specifically, the results related to their English writing skills show that the French immersion pupils relative to the English program pupils:

1. write longer stories.
2. use as much variety in their choice of English vocabulary (nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs) with the possible exception of their use of prepositions.
3. make proportionately fewer lexical misuse and morphological errors in each part of speech (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions and pronouns) except with articles.
4. make on the average more punctuation, capitalization, and spelling errors per story, but the differences are small. However, the French immersion pupils write longer stories and therefore have a greater opportunity of making errors. Thus, for example, when spelling errors are calculated as a

 percent of all vocabulary used, the percentage of spelling errors

made by the French immersion children in writing English stories is slightly lower than that of regular pupils.

5. write proportionately fewer simple and compound sentences and proportionately more complex and compound-complex sentences.

6. make proportionately the same number of syntactic errors.

7. are at least as creative in writing stories in that the two groups write proportionately about equally as many purely descriptive stories, narrative stories and stories with logical chronological sequencing. They give more stories a title and give more characters a name. They write more stories with dialogue. However, they write fewer stories creating events related to the picture but not depicted in it.

Generally speaking, the French stories written by the French immersion pupils contain more errors than their own English stories. Specifically, the results related to the French writing skills of the French immersion pupils relative to their English writing skills show that in French the French immersion pupils:

1. write shorter stories.

2. use as much variety in their choice of vocabulary (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs) with the exception of their use of prepositions.

3. make proportionately more lexical misuse and morphological errors in each part of speech. Difficulties in adjectives, articles and pronouns are related to the choice of appropriate morphological endings to signal gender, number and person. Similarly, difficulties in verbs are related to the morphology required to signal tense, number and person.

4. make on the average fewer punctuation and capitalization errors, although the differences are small. However, the French immersion pupils write shorter stories in French than they do in English and may, therefore, have less opportunity for making errors.

5. make on the average more spelling errors.

6. write proportionately more simple sentences and fewer compound-complex sentences.

7. make proportionately more syntactic errors.

8. write proportionately fewer stories with titles but more with names for characters. They write more purely descriptive stories as well as more stories which describe related events not represented in the picture. However, they make less use of dialogue. About equally as many of the English and French stories are told in a logical chronological sequence.

The results presented in this paper complement those presented in Barik and Swain (1974) concerning a larger sample of the Grade 3 students in the Ottawa French immersion program. On a standardized test of English achievement (Metropolitan Achievement Test), the French immersion pupils performed as well as their English peer group in word knowledge, reading and language (includes items on punctuation and capitalization), but not as well in spelling. On a standardized test of French achievement (Test de Rendement en Français) the French immersion pupils' performance was equivalent to that of from 23 to 39% of native French-speaking Grade 3 pupils.

In addition, the results of the present paper are, generally speaking, consistent with those noted by Genesee (1974) in a study of the writing skills of Grade 4 immersion pupils. Genesee had teachers rate compositions written in English by French immersion pupils and English program pupils. He found that the French immersion pupils were similar to their English educated counterparts in the following aspects of writing: sentence accuracy, vocabulary choice, sentence complexity and variety, and organization. The immersion students, however, lagged behind the non-immersion students on spelling. On the other hand, the immersion students were

rated higher than the non-immersion students on originality of thought, on punctuation and on length of story.

These results suggest that there is little need for alarm concerning the English writing skills of the French immersion pupils. Further instruction related to their French writing skills would seem of more concern at this time. The errors discussed in this paper should be useful in providing a basis for such instruction.

Footnotes

[1]Many thanks are expressed to Kathy McTavish and Kathy Scott who spent a great deal of time counting and recording the errors made by the students. This paper would not have been completed without their help. Thanks are also expressed to Dr. H.C. Barik who read and commented on an earlier draft of this paper.

[2]The examples given throughout the paper are taken from the texts of the students' stories. All errors made by the students in the examples quoted have been corrected in the text with the exception of the one being used to illustrate the point.

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Appendix A1

Spelling Errors: Regular English Pupils on Stories in English

ERROR		CORRECT FORM
atlas		at last
allowens		allowance
apon	(2X)	upon
are		our
alrendy, allready		already
anwerd		answered
agian		again
all ways		always
beter		better
bigest		biggest
bagag	(2X)	baggage
bye	(2X)	by
by		buy
breakfeast	(2X)	breakfast
buisniss		business
bother		brother
Berry		Barry
backing		baking
baby sit		babysit
bussy		busy
becaus		because
brat		brought
belown, belowe		below (?)
conpany		company
cot	(2X)	caught
cucing		cooking
cabnet		cabinet
climed		climbed
carryer		carrier
cralwed		crawled
coud		could
chare		care? chair?
Canaidan		Canadian

ERROR		CORRECT FORM
comming		coming
cealning		cleaning (?)
cealn		clean (?)
ckwickly		quickly
damag		damage
diver		driver
departmet		department
derret	(2X)	dessert (?)
did_'t		didn't
ever_		every
exiting		exciting
eveywhere		everywhere
ennofe		enough
engineyer		engineer
ex-ray		x-ray
eung		young
eny		any
faverit		favorite
fir, frie, firer	(3X)	fire, (?)
frieman, firenan	(2X)	fireman
firnen, firenen, firmen		firemen
fraind		friend
finaly, finilly		finally
fooen		fooling
Fridday		Friday

Appendix A1

Spelling Errors: Regular English Pupils on Stories in English

ERROR		CORRECT FORM
grandnother		grandmother
gos, gose, grined	(3X)	goes, grinned
happaliy		happily
hurd, herd, hared		heard
hospitle		hospital
houes		house
incirenc		insurance
junped		jumped
jaket		jacket
ladar		ladder
latter	(2X)	later
iast		last
lovly		lovely
ladly or laddly, lad		lady
mapel		maple
mater		matter
Marry		Mary
mad (?)		made
Manatoba		Manitoba
naber		neighbour
nummble		(?)
nekst		next
ninenten		nineteen
new, neew		now
nam		man
non't		not (?)
no		how (?)
olny		only
oven		of (?) often (?)
out_side		outside
off		of
peopl, peole		people
plece		police
plase		place
rored		roared
rememberd, remebered		remembered
realy		really
strang		strange
stars	(2X)	stairs
p_sairs		
stared, sarted	(2X)	started
squirl		squirrel
soid, siad		said
skie		ski
siting		sitting
sazs		says (?) saws (?)
smeed		(?)
smock		(?)
saing		saying
sow		saw
safves		saves
somthing	(4X)	something
streed		street
sher		sure
stoped		stopped
suden		sudden
skramed, sceamed		screamed
stashon, staision, stason, stasion		station

Appendix A1

Spelling Errors: Regular English Pupils on Stories in English

ERRORS		CORRECT FORM
through		throw
tride		tried
tain }		train
trian }	(2X)	
tianes		trains
The_		they
truk		truck
trues		trucks (?)
traying		trying
traped		trapped
trak		track
traks		tracks
thow		though
to	(5X)	too
two		too
too	(2X)	to
thire		there
there		their
ther		there
up_stairs		upstairs
vilage		village
wherck }		work
wark }		
wen		when
write	(2X)	right
wared		warned
well		while
windos		windows
wraped		wrapped
where	(3X)	were
wachted		watched
wavse	(2X)	waves
wating		waiting
yeld		yelled

ERROR	CORRECT FORM

Appendix A2

Spelling Errors: French Immersion Pupils on Stories in English

ERROR		CORRECT FORM
aspos		supposed
and		an
are	(2X)	our
all most		almost
annimals		animals
aroud		around
approching		approaching
aske	(2X)	ask
ageunst		against
axatly		exactly
upoun / a pone	(4X)	upon
awer		over
anquer		anchor
alarme		alarm
al		all
arme		arm
alwis		always (?)
agin		again
a nuther		another
avalanch		avalanche
All		I'll
apparte		apart
apoligized		apolgized
accross		across
adventuer		adventure
bey / by		buy
brige		bridge
burt / bernt / bunt	(3X)	burnt
bloing		blowing
brake		break

ERROR		CORRECT FORM
Beaty		Beatty
brote		brought
ble		(?)
bye		by
bate		body (?)
bin		been
becauce / becase / becuase	(2X)	because
canda		Canada
colled		called
crie		cry
chou		choo (?) chew (?)
cept		except
comeing / comming	(3X)	coming
calaps	(2X)	collapse
coverd		covered
completly		completely
controll		control
cabose		caboose
cheif / chife	(2X)	chief
climming		climbing
climed		climbed
chassing		chasing
cors		course
carots		carrots
cot / cought / cout	(2X)	caught
cood / cod / cede		could

Appendix A2

Spelling Errors: French Emmersion Pupils on Stories in English

ERROR		CORRECT FORM
Micheal	(3X)	Michael
mina_		minutes
minites		
murderd		murdered
musiums		museums
mishan		mission
Misses	(3X)	Mrs.
mamed		named
Montoel		Montreal
montines		mountains
montanes		
moutaine		mountain
midle		middle
mony		money
no	(2X)	know
niun		noon
new		knew
nitting		knitting
newsons		new ones
nabber		neighbour
Nabores		neighbours
neibours		
meighbores		
noure		(?)
Nochenal		National
needead		needed
northen		northern
off		of
ov		
of	(2X)	off
olny		only
ocklock		o'clock
oner		owner
our		hour
oonc		once
onece		
otawa		Ottawa

ERROR		CORRECT FORM
plain		plane
poot		put
payed		played (?) paid (?)
plaied		played
plaing	(5X)	playing
pasengerse		passengers
potatos		potatoes
Patricha		Patricia
purposly		purposely
puting		putting
permosion	(2X)	permission
preshes		precious
peaple	(3X)	people
pepole	(2X)	
quicly	(3X)	quickly
quit		quite
ruines		ruins
ruched		rushed
[illegible]		right or write
remenbered		remembered
remenrer		remember
robed		robbed
rocy		rocky
saveing		saving
sqirted		skirted (?) squirted (?)
suddenely		suddenly
sudnley		
sone		soon
super		supper
sparces		sparks (?) sparce (?)
sow		saw
skelitan		skeleton
speciale		special
spraing		sprang
sertanly		certainly
stif		stiff
semedly		(?)

Appendix A2

Spelling Errors: French Immersion Pupils on Stories in English

ERRORS		CORRECT FORM
diner	(3X)	dinner
diver		driver
dicided		decided
desle		diesel
departement, departnent	(2X)	department
danres		dangerous (?)
daze		days
draem		dream
exiting		exciting
everywere	(2X)	everywhere
everytime		every time
engin	(2X)	engine
Expeiraly		(?)
exsitment		excitement
excliamed		exclaimed
exited	(2X)	excited
erning		earning
equale		equal
enginear, enginer		engineer
exitement		excitement
exept		except
evrey		every
fryde		fried
finace		finance
fixt		fixed
freends	(3X)	friends
fist, farst		first
farnis	(2X)	furnace (?) furnish (?)
fond		found
foure		four

ERRORS		CORRECT FORM
gote		got
gose	(2X)	goes
girlfreid		girlfriend
here		hear
hy		high (?) hy (?)
hapened		happened
hostpital		hospital
haf		half
her	(2X)	here
hosbend		husband
him self		himself
hollo		hollow
hury		hurry
hos		whose (?) house (?)
heared, herd		heard
hose		house
huck		hook
hidrent		hundred
hhaw		who (?)
hif		if (?)
held		help
in side		inside
il		he'll (?) I'll (?)
idiet		idiot
knowked		knew
lather, latter	(2X)	later
lader		ladder
lade		lady
living		leaving
littel, litle	(2X)	little
let		lit
locamotive		locomotive
liftime		life time
luckyley		luckily

Appendix A2

Spelling Errors: French Emmersion Pupils on Stories in English

ERROR		CORRECT FORM
skered		scared
smorning		this morning
salades		salads
safly		safely
scoquuel		schedule
stoped	(3X)	stopped
shavels		shovels
sirup		syrup
suqaud		squad
sow		sew
spraded		sprayed
sparc		sparse
soporsed		supposed
socking		soaking
somm		some
sead		said
stated, stared, sarted		started
shoud		should
screamming, screeming, screming	(3X)	screaming
screemed		screamed
statione, staiton, staition	(2X)	station
tomorow, tommoriow		tomorrow
touck, tock		took
then		than
tough		through
trakes, tracs		tracks
traintraks		train tracks
trickcing		trickling
tring		trying

ERROR		CORRECT FORM
thup		thump
thru, through		threw
the_		them
trile		trial
thoe		though
thai	(2X)	they
to	(4X)	too
to, tow	(2X)	two
tow	(2X)	to or too
too, te, tow	(2X)	to
ther, theer, their	(3X)	there
there	(10X)	they're
there, theer	(2X)	their
thers	(2X)	there's
there's		theirs
they're		their
unites		units
useuly		usually
une		one
undestand		understand
veery, vary, vare		very
Vancoover		Vancouver
vacaition, vacatione		vacation

Appendix A2

Spelling Errors: French Emmersion Pupils on Stories in English

ERRORS		CORRECT FORM
wan		one
wer		wear
whith	(2X)	with
wonderd		wondered
wasent was'it		wasn't
whaching wathing		watching
wene	(2X)	when
wa		way
whated		wanted
wating		waiting
would'ed		wouldn't
wich	(2X)	which
wait		what
wayved		waved
wafes	(2X)	waves
worck		work
write		right
will whel		we'll
whent		went
wore		were
where wher or where	(3X)	
were	(3X)	where
youse		yours

Appendix A3

Spelling Errors: French Immersion Pupils on Stories in French

ERROR		CORRECT FORM
audesous		au-dessous
avoirs		avoir
alore / alor		alors
à	(10x)	a
a	(82x)	à
ami		amis
anvie		envie
aten		attend ? a temps?
aurevoir	(2x)	au revoir
autre		autres
aujourdui / aujourd'ui	(3x) / (2x)	aujourd'hui
assi / ausie	(2x)	aussi
apré		après
an		en
annè		année
ai		et
apercoit		aperçoit
areter		arrêté
arrete		arrête
atraper	(3x)	attraper
attraper		attrapé
attrape		attraper
appartien / apetient		appartient
a amener		a amené
sont arrivé		sont arrivés
arrivée		arrivé
achete		acheter
achete		achète
avait / avais		avaient
avet / avie		avait
avee		avait?
aver		avait?
ai aporter	(2x)	ai apporté
aporter	(3x)	apporter
aporrte		apporte
apporte	(2x)	apportent
apres	(3x)	après

ERROR		CORRECT FORM
aporté		apporté
aporté / aporte	(2x)	apporter
aporte / aport	(2x) / (3x)	apporte
allé / allée / alle / aler	(2x)	aller
allé		allés
aller	(3x)	allé
sont aller		sont allés
alée		allés
alée / alés	(2x)	allé
bonomme		bonhomme
bot		botte
botes		bottes
beacoup	(4x)	beaucoup
bonne histoire		bonnes histoires
batteaux		bateaux
bato		bateau
des bêtise		bêtises
brisser		brisé
blans		blanc
brun		bruns
beaux		beau
baignez		baigner
beingné		beigné
bibliantic / bibliotehèque / bibliotic / bibliôthèque	(2x)	bibliothèque
cen		quand
celce chose		quelque chose
cane		canne
ceil		ciel
comance		commence
Cecile		Cécile

ERROR		CORRECT FORM
chocalat		chocolat
come		comme
Clode		Claude
cloch		cloche
chaute		chaude?
Calafornia		California
comment		comment
cooved		?
les cigale		les cigales
checher		chercher
chose		choses
class	(4x)	classe
content		contents
conteant	(2x)	content
chateâu / chateau	(7x)	château
court		cours
cour		courent
cour		cours
cours / cour	(2x)	court
courr	cours ? court	
cerf-volante	(3x)	cerf-volant
cerf-volent	(2x)	
cervolen	(2x)	
c'est sa		c'est ça
cest		cette
cetais		c'était
cet		c'est
c'est		sait
cest	(2x)	ses
cest		s'est
doure		dur
devoir		devoirs
diset		dix-sept
desider		décide
dollar		dollars
desus	(2x)	dessus
deaur		?

ERROR		CORRECT FORM
diner		dîner
danes		dans
dinner / diner	(2x)	dîner
det		des
di / dis	(2x)	dit
demin	(4x)	demain
Dahcor		D'accord?
dacord		d'accord
a donnez	(3x)	a donné
a donner		a donné
dehor	(4x)	dehors
deor	(3x)	
deores		
deheur		
duore		
estoire		histoire?
erbe		herbe
eutre		autre
escalier		escaliers
esay	(2x)	essaie
es-ce		est-ce
enfant / enfen	(2x)	enfants
ecole	(12x)	école
échapper		échappé
échape		échappe
est	(3x)	et
et	(10x)	est
es	(2x)	est
et		es
ête		est
el		?
é		et
éter		était
etais		
èstait		
éte	(4x)	

ERROR		CORRECT FORM
esté		était
etre	(2x)	être
a étét	(2x)	a été
était	(2x)	étais
etait, estait	(6x)	était
forses		forces
foide		froide
fore, for		fort
fot		faut
fain		fin
faſé, facher		fâché
finis	(2x)	fini
foie, foit, foir		fois
fare, fère, fer		faire
fait		fais
fais, fès	(2x) (2x)	fait
grivoner	(2x)	griffoner
ganbader		gambader
grose	(2x)	gros
garcon	(5x)	garçon
heurs	(2x)	heures
heurex, heusaux		heureux
ilya		il y a
ils		il
ill		il
il	(6x)	ils
inquète		inquiète

ERROR		CORRECT FORM
Jaques, Jaque	(2x) (3x)	Jacques
journee		journée
jaite		j'étais
joues		jouet
jous, joueer, joué, joue		jouer
jou, joue, jout	(3x)	jouent
jouent		jouets
jouè		jouet
joets		jouets
a joues, a jouer	(4x)	a joué
jou		joue
kans		dans?
lest		laisse
lopital		l'hôpital
lake	(2x)	lac
lentdemain		lendemain
livelle		?
lecole		l'école
lear, leurs		leur
lessy, laise		laissé
la	(2x)	là
liver		livre
ses livre	(6x)	ses livres
machait		marchait
magazin		magasin
malheurese		malheureuse
mechante		méchante
mama		maman
mateau		?

ERROR		CORRECT FORM
march	(2x)	marche
mot		mots
maime		m'aime
maitress	(2x)	maîtresse
mère	(2x)	mer
mére		mère
minuet		minutes
muse		musée
monsoeur	(2x)	monsieur
mouée, mouyie	(2x)	mouillé
maiyey		mouillé?
mathématique, matimatique, mathemat[illegible]que	(2x)	mathématiques
met, mes, m'est, mait		mais
mes, mais	(2x)	met
metrenant		maintenant?
mentnet, maitenent, maintent, maitemant		maintenant
nintnen		nineteen ? maintenant?
nottre		autre
nouse		nous
ou	(2x)	où
oiseau, ouisou		oiseaux
ont	(4x)	on
on		ont
o		au
ojourdui	(2x)	aujourd'hui
pa	(2x)	pas
pèché		pêcher
pesen		paysan ?

ERROR		CORRECT FORM
pemier		premier
porte		porter
pries		près ?
partie		parti
picnic		pique-nique
peure		peur
perde		perd
prepart		prépare
plait		plaît
povons		pouvons
poor		pour
panse, pens		pense
persons, persones		personnes
poisson, poisons	(2x)	poissons
peitte, petête, ptite		petite
peid	(2x)	pied
piers		pieds
profesoeur, proffesseur	(2x)	professeur
proveseur	(2x)	
proffeseur	(2x)	
prent, prends	(2x)	prend
pron		prend?
pran		prend
pendans, pandeat		pendant
parapoie, paraplui, parepluit, paraplie		parapluie
pluit, plui, pluis	(2x) (2x)	pluie
pleure		pleurer
par ce que, pas que	(2x)	parce que

ERROR		CORRECT FORM
passque	(2x)	parce que
parceque		
par-se-que	(2x)	
peu	(2x)	peut
peu	(2x)	peux
peut	(3x)	
peux		peut
peur		
peu		peuvent
pleu	(3x)	pleut
pleue	(2x)	
pleux		
pler		pleure
pleure		
plaue		plu
qu'es que		qu'est-ce que
questqu		
quesque		
qulqeu		quelque
quelle		quel
qaund	(2x)	quand
qand	(3x)	
quant		
roche		roches
recreasion		récréation
roux		roue
reste		rester
revien		revient
raporter		rapporter
repondit		répondit
retournez		retourner
ramace		ramasse
ramacer		ramasser
regardé		regarder
regarde		
ai regarder		ai regardé
régarde		regarde
regadz		regardez

ERROR		CORRECT FORM
sapelle		s'appelle
samdi		samedi
Suzzane	(3x)	Suzanne
Sussan		Susan
sercret		secret
shose		choses
selêver		se lever
sait		sais
sans va		s'en va
solien		?
sortai		sortait
son ala		s'en aller?
seicher		sécher
sech		sec
soer		soeur
seour		
sone		sonne
sonner		sonné
soufle	(3x)	souffle
sa	(11x)	ça
son	(3x)	sont
sont	(6x)	son
serf-volante	(2x)	cerf-volant
ser-volant	(2x)	
servolant	(2x)	
ser-volen		
serf-volant	(3x)	
serf-volent		
sétait	(2x)	c'était
sétaint		c'étaient
sètre		être
sette		cette
set		cette?
sest		c'est
se		ce
sait		c'est
sais		
se		
ses	(7x)	
setais		c'était

ERROR		CORRECT FORM
text	(2x)	texte
travers		traverse
travil, travaille	(2x)	travail
toute de suite		tout de suite
tous a coup, toute à coup		tout à coup
tu, toute, tous	(2x)	tout
a terniner		a terminé
tres, tras	(4x)	très
trampe	(5x)	trempé
tramp, trempe, tranpe	(2x)	
temp	(2x)	temps
tant, tent	(3x)	
tombey		tombé
tombé	(3x)	tomber
a tomber	(3x)	a tombé
tonber, tomber	(2x)	tombé
est tomber	(2x)	est tombé
ai trouver	(3x)	ai trouvé
trouvée		trouver
trouve	(2x)	trouve
a trouver	(2x)	a trouvé
ue		eu
vetements		vêtements
voila, vola		voilà
vert		vers
voix		voit
voit		voient
vie		va?
vas		va
voil		voile

ERROR		CORRECT FORM
voleille		voler
vol	(2x)	vole
vait, ve	(2x)	vais
vian, vien, viens		vient
veut	(4x)	veux
ve		veut ?